

Mr. Hart said that a very slight addition to the sun's atmosphere would have a great influence on the earth.

2. "Note on the Wandering Albatros (*Diomedea exulans*)," by Sir W. Buller, K.C.M.G., D.Sc., F.R.S. (*Transactions*, p. 340.)

Sir J. Hector said that Mr. Chapman had lately visited the islands referred to, and his views pointed to a different conclusion from that of Sir W. Buller. He hoped Mr. Chapman would place his notes on the subject before the society.

Mr. Travers mentioned that his son had also made observations on these birds on the expedition referred to by Sir J. Hector. The birds came to full plumage after four years, and began to breed before that time. He described how the gulls got the fish out of the bivalves by taking them to a height and letting them drop, when the shell broke and the fish was eaten.

Mr. Tregear had seen numbers of these birds at the Chathams. They had only white plumage, and were not able to fly.

3. "On some Maori Implements of Uncommon Design," by T. W. Kirk, F.R.M.S.

The specimens were procured from an old burial-ground on the east coast of the Wellington District. They are—

No. 1, Stone Axe.—A remarkably wide and flat weapon, $8\frac{1}{2}$ in. long by 4 in. in its greatest width—that is, just where the curve of the cutting-edge springs. From here to the top is a gradual curve, the narrow end which fits into the handle being somewhat rounded. It is $\frac{3}{4}$ in. thick in the centre, whence it slopes in all directions, with a margin right round, quite as sharp as the usual cutting-edges. It is made of a dark-green clay-slate, and has been highly polished. A glance is sufficient to show that it is quite unlike an ordinary Maori *kapu*. There is, however, in the collection of Maori adzes in the Museum a specimen exhibiting a decided similarity to the Fiji weapons, being thick and rounded, tapering to a point at the head. The one before us is very like—indeed, almost identical with—one from Queensland presented to the Museum by Sir G. Bowen. This is, however, of undoubted South Sea origin. Indeed, the fact is well established that the natives of some parts of Australia obtain weapons from the Islanders. My weapon was found with portions of the skeleton of an adult Maori.

No. 2 is presumably a pestle for pounding fern-root. The total length is $10\frac{1}{2}$ in.; the greatest diameter $2\frac{1}{2}$ in. at the middle, whence it tapers slightly and equally to both ends. The ends themselves are somewhat rounded, and are evidently meant to be used indiscriminately. The stone—apparently a hard sandstone—has been carefully dressed and smoothed, but not polished. It was dug out from near the root of a large karaka-tree, and is, so far as I know, unique as a New Zealand implement. An examination shows few or no points of similarity with the ordinary Maori fern-beater, whilst it reveals a wonderful likeness to the grain-pestles of some of the American Indians.

No. 3, a greenstone ear-pendant, in the form of an adze, $1\frac{1}{2}$ in. long by exactly $\frac{1}{2}$ in. in greatest width, is very flat, but pierced at the top to allow of a string to suspend it by. This was found buried with the skeleton of a young child; it was lying quite close to the skull. I have never seen an ear-ornament of this design before, though I believe necklaces of bones cut into similar shapes are known, but rare.

These few articles are exhibited this evening in the hope that those members of the Society who are skilled in Maori matters may be able to

give some explanation of the occurrence in this country of implements of an apparently foreign origin.

Sir James Hector said the specimens were very interesting, but, although somewhat different from some of the ordinary implements, he hardly thought they could be considered altogether rare. The Maoris were fond of cutting ornaments out of greenstone, and the reason of the small size of the adze was probably owing simply to the fact that the piece of stone happened to be no larger. It might have been a pure accident.

Mr. Percy Smith had seen stone axes very similar to No. 1, although perhaps not quite the same; neither did he think No. 2 altogether rare. There were a great variety of stone implements among the natives, and he did not think there was anything very uncommon in those before the meeting.

Mr. Tregear said he had a small adze almost exactly like No. 3, except that it had no hole in it. He thought it likely that the natives used these small adzes for fine carving; or, possibly, it may have been intended for a child's ornament.

4. "On the Assumed Hybridity between the Common Fowl and the Woodhen (*Ocydromus*)," by James Murie, M.D., LL.D., F.L.S. Communicated by Sir Walter Buller, K.C.M.G., F.R.S. (*Transactions*, p. 342.)

Mr. Tregear exhibited some skulls from the Chatham Islands.
